



Marine Safety Office/Group Portland, Oregon

Waterfront News

June 2000

Too many emails, letters, magazines? Not enough time for you to read a long, chatty newsletter? Here are the basic facts in short sentences, brief paragraphs. Need to know more? Call us!

From the Captain's Desk...

Partnering to Promote Safety Awareness Look for public service ads on network television warning boaters and fisherman of the grave dangers associated with anchoring in a navigational channel. It is a never-ending educational effort to keep boaters alive. Please do your part to inform boaters to "make-way" for large, difficult-to-maneuver vessels that need to stay in the channels.

Many Thanks to Mr. Joel Hernandez and Mr. Hugh Ackroyd!

Marine Safety Office/Group Portland recently received several outstanding pieces of memorabilia for display. Mr. Joel Hernandez has provided several exceptional models of Coast Guard ships and aircraft and has also donated artwork. Maritime photographer Mr. Hugh Ackroyd has donated photographs of the Coast Guard "tall ship" Eagle and a passenger ship fire that occurred in Astoria, Oregon. **Our heartfelt thanks to these gentlemen for affording us the opportunity to display these mementos celebrating the maritime industry and Coast Guard tradition and missions.** Their generous donations have joined other historical photographs, artwork, and artifacts donated by the Navy League, Coast Guardsmen, Auxiliarists, and others over the years. You can view this growing collection throughout the unit.

Accomplished Artist "to Paint the Town" Mr. Ron Weil, an accomplished artist participating in the Coast Guard Art Program, has begun visiting facilities and vessels in the Portland area. He will turn some of his field photographs into high quality oil paintings. For those who have not seen Mr. Weil's work, it's exceptional! We look forward to showcasing his paintings (if only on a temporary basis) in the not too distant future!

The men and women of MSO/Group Portland consider it a great privilege to contribute to the preservation of maritime heritage and welcome the opportunity to celebrate the rich traditions symbolized by these mementos. Further, we encourage others in our community to preserve symbols of our heritage. The face of the maritime industry is quickly changing and if we do not act to preserve our history now, the opportunity will be lost.

Dave Godel (Mngr Environmental Services) and Jim Underwood (Safety Manager) and other Tidewater Barge Lines employees partnered with us

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to determine benzene exposures and required protection during petroleum product transfers....critically important given the three fold increase in tank vessel activity in the Portland/Vancouver area due to the Olympic Pipeline shutdown.

Clatsop Community College has an innovative "modular" formatted, hands on maritime training program. They provide training for all levels of mariners, recreational to professional. Classes including Radar Observer, ARPA, GMDSS, USCG Marine License Training and Testing, FCC Radio Licensing, Marine Safety Training, and HAZardous Waste Operator (HAZWOPER) Training. The school also provides training in Celestial Navigation, Rules of the Road, Basic to Advanced Navigation, Marine Electronics, Weather, Tides and Currents, Charts, Aids to Navigation, and Vessel Stability. Additionally, they are working toward opening a new Marine Fire Fighting Facility, and are developing curriculum for Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW).

Astoria Fire Chief, Lane Wintermutte, and the Maritime Fire and Safety Association hosted a well coordinated and executed ship fire response drill. The drill included both a table top exercise and hands on training for several fire departments, and spill response personnel throughout the zone. Great job to Chief Wintermutte and the staff of MFSA!

The cooperation and work from Capt. Ron Rachio and LT. Scott Heesacker of the Portland Fire Bureau as well as Firefighter Jeff Johnson of the Vancouver Fire Bureau has helped significantly to increased the knowledge base of local firefighters, and the Coast Guard inspectors, as to the challenges and hazards of shipboard firefighting. Their willingness and work, "smoking out" passenger, freight and tank vessels has increased the effectiveness of our shipboard fire drills and has trained numerous mariners in actual fire scenarios.

The teamwork displayed between Mr. Alan Jones' group at Cascade General, the owners of the M/V COLUMBIA QUEEN, and my staff, which resulted in this former casino boat being converted into a working passenger vessel carrying 161 people on the Columbia, Snake and Willamette Rivers, is appreciated . We expect this vessel to sail the local rivers for a long time, safely and peacefully to the enjoyment of its many passengers.

Jim Townley, of the Columbia River Steamship Operators Association, has always been very accessible and helpful in acting as a liaison between the CG and the marine industry, especially the agents, operators and owners of deep draft vessels.

Capt Lee of Pan Ocean Shipping is an excellent example of the cooperative spirit between the CG and the marine industry. Upon recognizing his chartered vessels were not in compliance with SOLAS firefighting requirements, he quickly coordinated all aspects of the modifications to the vessels within his control and arranged for vessels loading cargoes of plywood to come within compliance.

Capt John Pigott of Tidewater Barge Lines has spearheaded the Columbia River Towboaters Associations efforts to buy air time on television stations and solicit funding from government and industry to produce commercials intended to educate the public to the dangers of anchoring in the river channels. An extremely ambitious and worthy effort

Roses bloom on the grounds of the MSO/Group for the first time in many years thanks to the landscape architecture of Coast Guard Auxiliarist Rod Lamb, the generous donation of rose plants by Hoppi and Cebert Bryan, and the labors of the BLUEBACK Council of the Navy League which brought it all together. Just one of the examples of a community working in partnership toward a common goal to achieve excellent results. I applaud all of you for your outstanding example. In today's business world there is precious little "spare" time and energy to put towards additional projects. But I believe that for that very reason, we need to develop productive partnerships in order to stay competitive, efficient, and satisfy the needs of our customers and constituents. I look forward to making examples of these partnerships a regular part of our newsletters.

From the Port Operations Branch...

Secretary of Transportation's Marine Transportation System (MTS) Report on the Internet By going to www.dot.gov and searching under "MTS Report", you can access the Secretary's report on the current and future expectations of our MTS. This report summarizes feedback obtained at "regional listening sessions" conducted

throughout the country to learn what users, stakeholders, and the public perceived to be the current state of MTS and its future needs. It also identifies critical areas and strategic actions required to meet national objectives. Policy for the MTS initiative is being developed. The initiative is viewed as a critical collaboration of government and industry to meet our nation's high standards of safety, competitiveness, infrastructure, security, and environment. Stay tuned.

Working to Improve Communications on the Upper Columbia and Snake Rivers. Sporadic and potentially dangerous "dead spots" for radio and cell phone communication exist in the Columbia River Gorge and Eastern sections of the Columbia and Snake Rivers. Although we are working to alleviate these problems and assist with providing clean communications, owners are reminded that it is their responsibility to contact the Coast Guard by whatever means possible in the event of a casualty, accident, or pollution spill. Several companies are being proactive and using satellite phones to improve their communications ability; however, there are still dead spots to be found. Mariners have had success using the lock tenders at dams to relay communications in emergency situations.

Passenger Vessels Visiting the Columbia & Willamette Rivers. Vessel owners, operators, and crews that periodically visit the Columbia and Willamette River systems are reminded of the hazards posed on these rivers... quick currents, cold water, rocky outcrops, and hidden turns. Locks and dams pose additional obstacles and create sudden differences in flow rate. Many sections of these rivers are very remote with minimal medical, emergency response, and communications coverage. Vessel operators must be prepared to handle a wide range of emergencies. Every vessel should have a listing of local emergency resources, including hospitals, police, rescue, oil spill response, and towing companies, for each section of river they will transit. We also recommend operators obtain the telephone numbers and radio contact information for the lock tenders at each of the dams to ensure that communications can be established during an emergency.

Proactive Efforts Help Reduce Reactive Evolutions. Monitoring oil transfer operations for regulatory compliance is one way we apply this adage. Both the Port Operations Branch and the Port State Control Branch, who inspect visiting foreign-flag ships, use this process to reduce the risk of spills, catching mistakes and problems before the spill occurs. If you see our monitoring teams around the area more often, it is because of a renewed priority to attending transfers. Our records indicate that there were over 600 notifications of vessel-to-vessel transfers in the Portland COTP zone...in one quarter! This doesn't include transfers between shoreside and vessels.

Increased Gasoline Tanker Traffic to Portland. Since the shut down of the Olympic pipeline, tanker traffic continues at a brisk pace. There have been 29 gasoline tank ship visits this year, with virtually all of them lightering to barges at anchorage. This lightens the draft prior to going dockside to complete off-loading. As in Seattle, the Portland Marine Safety Office is developing a written lightering policy based on best industry practices. In the interim, we are requiring that tankship masters engaging in lightering operations to notify the Operations Center by VHF radio or telephone when they begin and complete operations or if they have to shutdown for any emergency reasons. Additionally, if sustained wind speeds are at or above 30 kts, receiving vessels shall not come alongside. If operations are already underway, additional attention must be given to monitoring conditions to minimize risk. When sustained winds reach 40 kts, operations shall cease, and hoses will be drained and disconnected. These conditions are currently being passed to tankship operators before each operation and will be incorporated in forthcoming written policy.

New Transfer Reporting Deadlines A 4 hour minimum reporting time before all commercial marine oil transfers over 250 bbls, whether vessel-to-vessel or vessel-to-shore, will be required in a forthcoming letter to all facilities, mobile or fixed. This will supercede a December 1997 COTP letter that exempted shore-related transfers from this under 33 CFR 156.118. Our intention is to accurately track bulk petroleum transfer activity and monitor higher-risk operations, either by their design or track record. It is not to create a laborious reporting system for the industry.

New Online Reporting of Oil Transfers and Advance-Notice-of-Arrivals (ANA) Coming this Summer Look for an online means of electronically reporting both bulk oil transfers and vessel ANA's by summer. This will ease the burden on industry and assist us in tracking and standardizing input. We are developing a link from our unit website that will allow dispatchers, management, and agents to quickly fill in a simple, multi-category screen & send it to us electronically. When ready and tested, all parties will be notified of the availability. Additionally, we are also finalizing an improved Port Operations /Environmental Response link from the unit website, specific to pollution prevention, spill response, waterfront facilities, and freight container inspection. You can visit us at <http://www.uscg.mil/d13/units/msoportland>.

OPA 90 Mandated Review of Facility Oil Spill Response Plans. This continues to be one of several hot tickets in the Port Operations Branch. It involves all Marine Transportation-Related (MTR) facilities that transfer oil in bulk (over 250 bbls) to a vessel. Every 5 years, management must submit an updated plan for COTP approval. For details, see 33 CFR 154.1060 online at www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/regs/reghome.html.

Certificates of Adequacy for Reception Facilities. The regulations, outlined in 33 CFR 158, deal with a facilities' ability to receive and dispose of waste oil, noxious liquid substances (NLS), and garbage. This has become an area of increased focus for Port operations. Interesting compliance note: Recreational marinas that can moor 10 or more boats must provide ready garbage disposal access to boat owners. Check the above website for further information.

The New Carissa Review Committee Makes Recommendations to the Portland Ports & Waterways Safety Committee

The five main recommendations are:

- ✓ State of Oregon should take a more active role in the Portland P&WS Committee, encourage the committee to address marine safety issues identified by the NCRC, and work towards continuously improving Marine Transportation System (MTS) safety.
- ✓ Oregon Board of Maritime Pilots, other pilot associations, maritime stakeholders, and the P&WSC should all work together to promote a more proactive approach to marine safety.
- ✓ Encourage MTS users to conduct periodic reviews of NOAA charts and the Coast Pilot.
- ✓ Develop a written warning indicating that the exposed coastal waters of Oregon do not provide safe anchorage during winter months.
- ✓ Evaluate the benefits of extending the International Tug of Opportunity System (ITOS) to Oregon coastal waters.

The P&WSC is addressing these topics in sub-committee workgroups. The final version of the New Carissa Review Committee's report is expected to be released by Governor Kitzhaber soon.

NOAA Chart and Coast Pilot Review. The Portland Ports & Waterways Safety Committee will be working with NOAA to update the charts and Coast Pilot for the Columbia/Snake River system. If you are interested in providing input for this review, contact sub-committee Chair, Captain John Betz (OR DEQ) at (503) 229-6793 or Lieutenant Commander Dawayne Penberthy (503) 240-9327.

From the Inspections Bullpen...

New Passenger Vessel Launched Delta Queen Steamboat Company, owned by American Classical Voyages, has completed construction of the vessel COLUMBIA QUEEN. The COLUMBIA QUEEN carries 161 passengers on weeklong cruises along the Columbia and Snake Rivers. Originally built in 1993 at Leevac Shipyard on the Gulf Coast for service as a casino boat, the vessel was never completed and was purchased by Delta Queen Steamboat Company in 1999. The vessel eventually made her way to Cascade General to be retrofitted with staterooms for overnight passengers. The maiden voyage was on 27 May and a christening ceremony was held on 03 June.

Suggested Maintenance Recommendations Sent to Maritime Publications Recommendation letters have been sent to National and Regional mariner associated publications alerting them of the necessity for regular and strict adherence to manufacturer-specified maintenance requirements. This is in response to a failed hydraulic steering system casualty caused by poor maintenance.

Spring Safety Meetings for Jetboat Incident Prevention Initiative A safety meeting was held in both Central and Southwestern Oregon to inform mariners of the Jetboat Incident Prevention Initiative (JIPI). An open forum was held with the local jet boat operators to discuss current trends and possible problems.

1999 Mandate Placing Increased Emphasis on At-Sea Boardings Fishing vessel safety is continuing to push the 1999 mandate to crackdown on safety gear and training deficiencies. Boarding Officers will ensure all required safety gear is being carried and properly maintained onboard commercial fishing vessels. If a vessel has had a recent dockside exam, it will be a lower priority for boarding and we will only spot-check the safety gear. Boarding officers are now provided with an electronic job aid (Palm Pilot) to ensure that they are consistent and systematic in

the checking of the required gear. Our new compliance program still allows fishermen to obtain a dockside exam after correcting discrepancies found at sea to avoid the civil penalty process.

Comprehensive Inspection of Previously Non-Inspected Items Requested Don't limit safety and PMS exams! A fatality resulting from the failure of an uninspected loading ramp illustrates the need to think broadly during review of procedures and inspection of equipment.

From the Licensing and Investigations Branch...

New Drug and Alcohol Testing Law The CG Appropriations Act amended 46 U.S.C. 2303 by adding 46 U.S.C. 2303a, titled "Post Serious Marine Casualty Alcohol Testing." The amendment requires testing be accomplished within two hours, or soon thereafter as safety concerns allow. The law does not define "serious marine casualty" and implementing regulations have not been written.

Merchant Marine License and Document Renewals License/MMD renewals can no longer be accomplished "over the counter." National Driver Register checks must be completed prior to issuance of renewed, original, or raise-of-grade license/MMD. Process takes approximately 3 to 7 business days to complete.

Towing Vessel Licensing and Manning Regulations Effective date is November 20, 2000. NVIC regarding implementation policy/guidance for Towing Officer Assessment Record (TOAR) requirements expected to be released July 2000. Proposed that TOAR will not be required for first renewal of towing officer license after November 2000.

Towing Vessel Licensing Regulation Changes Effective November 20, 2000. A question and answer session was held at MSO Portland Training Deck in the Mt. Rainier Building on Wednesday, June 21st. The interim final rule was published in the Federal Register on November 19, 1999.

Nautical Charts Available on the Web Sailors who want to update their nautical charts can now do it via the Internet.

National Ocean Service website: www.nos.noaa.gov Maptech website: www.maptech.com

Preparedness Through Planning...

Incident Command System Training a Huge Success. On March 8-9, 2000 and April 24-28, 2000, MSO Portland hosted basic, intermediate, and advanced Incident Command System training. Participants included key government and industry emergency responders from throughout the Portland/Vancouver area, Coos Bay, and Seattle. Thank you to the sponsors of the training: Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Sause Bros. Inc., Maritime Fire and Safety Association, and the 13th Coast Guard District. Without their support the training could not have taken place.

PREP Exercise Scheduled MSO/Group Portland's Triennial Area Pollution Preparedness Exercise (PREP) is scheduled for Aug 16th and 17th. It will be held in conjunction with the Chemical Hazardous Material Manager's (CHMM) Annual Conference, Aug 14-18th. The exercise will be an oil and hazardous substance release. In you have any questions concerning the PREP exercise contact the Planning Department at 503-240-9325.

On Schedule with NPREP Exercises We held our first unannounced NPREP exercise for the year 2000 at the Shore Oil Terminal. Personnel from Shore Oil and OSRO-Foss Environmental did an outstanding job. In addition to unannounced drills, we are stepping up our involvement in normally scheduled facility drills. If you would like USCG participation in your drill, submit the exercise worksheet to MSO Portland Planning Branch requesting our participation.

Do You Have an Exercise/Drill Scheduled? If so, is it on the Northwest Area Committee Exercise/Drill Schedule? The schedule is intended to list all the drills/exercises for regulated facilities throughout the entire Northwest. Many facilities are coming up on their required worst-case scenario drill and there will be a great demand for regulators.

To ensure the presence of a regulator to obtain federal/state credit, it is very important to get your drill on the schedule, which is used for scheduling state/federal personnel. To add your drill/exercise, contact Elin Storey at 425-649-7098 or email at eabr461@ecy.wa.gov. Schedule can be accessed via the internet at www.uscg.mil/d13/m/nwprepsched.html

Northwest Area Contingency Plan (NWACP) Now Available Online The newest edition of the NWACP, approved in November of 1998, is now available online at: www.uscg.mil/d13/units/msopuget/nwac.html.

Geographic Response Plans (GRPs) for Oregon Now Available Online at www.deq.state.or.us/wmc/cleanup/cugrpmain.html. Washington is currently developing online versions of their GRPs. All GRPs are under revision by the GRP Workgroup. Changes will be posted as soon as they are available.

